



Laymon, Stephen &lt;stephen\_laymon@fws.gov&gt;

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## Peer review Comments on Proposes Rule to designate Critical Habitat

1 message

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**Murrelet Halterman** <mhalterman@harveyecology.com>

Tue, Oct 14, 2014 at 5:25 PM

To: "Laymon, Stephen" <stephen\_laymon@fws.gov>

Hello, Steve,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Proposes Rule to designate Critical Habitat for the Yellow-billed Cuckoo.

I had only one comment on the document, and it addresses the lack of biological information about the species, not any lack in the proposed rule. The habitat included looks appropriate, all pertinent information was included and sited, and the exclusions and other actions looked appropriate.

Question 1: the Services descriptions, etc. are accurate, logical, and supported by the data.

Question 2: Biological and ecological requirements on the species were accurately described. The scientific foundation included all current data.

Question 3. Conclusions in the proposed rule are reasonable and scientifically-sound.

Question 4. Areas covered are appropriate for the species and are sufficient in extent and number.

Question 5. The exclusions are appropriate for the reasons given, and these areas will be appropriately managed for the species.

Question 6. The best available science was described and used for the proposed rule.

Question 7. I am unaware of any omitted peer-reviewed papers.

Question 8. The level of detail and explanation was sufficient.

Question 9. Some scientific uncertainties were identified and characterized, but there are three additional major gaps in the current data: 1. Knowledge of migration routes, plus pre-season movement before breeding, and post-season movement after breeding, but before migration. 2. Appropriate and reasonable methods for accurately assessing prey populations; 3. Factors influencing prey base, and how this affects fluctuations in cuckoo occupancy of habitat from year to year.

Thank you,

*Murrelet*



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